[P. 419] Chunut

796 At the end of the singing and dancing[1] people who had long illnesses would be brought
[755] in to be cured. The shaman brushed off the patient with a flipping motion of his hand feathers. Neither doctor nor patients ate any meat for six days after this performance.[101]

765 The Huhuna Dance, which in the foothills is part of the annual mourning celebration but may also occur as a discrete entertainment, was known in the lake region only as an adjunct to the mourning ceremonies. J.A. recalls a performance at Tule River Reservation some twenty years ago, and another in Tachi territory when she was a little girl. Her failure to give a specific account of this for the Chunut fits
[184] with the Tachi (M.G.) statement that the Choinuk, Telamni, and northerners (Hoshima) lacked the dance. For its description see "Mourning Ceremony."

796 Guksai is a name mistakenly applied to Huhuna by some informants. J.A. clearly distinguished between the two and, indeed, was the one person who had seen and knew exactly who Guksai was. She saw this dancer at a mourning ceremony in Drum Valley; his performance followed immediately upon Huhuna's.

This man was a doctor. His tribal affiliation was not known to J.A., who thinks he
[756] might have been Choinimni. He was dressed, not in Huhuna's long feather robe, but in the usual doctor's regalia: feather headdress (sema and ču), feather strand skirt, white paint (ho·šot) in streaks on his body but none on his face; he carried a bone whistle. He danced about by himself, then he would sit down for a while and sing to an accompaniment: Huhuna never sang. Guksai could not find money. But like Huhuna, he was "killed" by a doctor. In this instance it was a shaman named Manuelo (otherwise unknown to J.A.) who functioned. While Guksai was unconscious, the spectators wept but ceased as soon as he was revived.

J.A. said that Guksai was never seen "down this way" (in the valley or lake region); she did not know the subject of his songs. Both Huhuna and Guksai performed solely for the purpose of making money; the spectators wanted it because "it made the people giving the fandango [mourning ceremony] cry."

536 Pleasure dances (ha·tim) were frequently held. A chief might give such little parties
517 (again referred to as lonu·witi) at his house.
574 His wife and female relatives prepared quantities of food, and all the guests brought food contributions for which they were paid. The guests were "anybody" of any moiety, everybody from the village went, or any visitor from near-by villages. This was "just for a good
[534] time," and neither singers nor dancers were paid. The singers used the clapper accompaniment for such profane affairs. The songs "did

[101] No payment was mentioned in connection with this affair, and my neglect to ask about it is a serious omission.

[1] [i.e., of the seed-growing dance of the Chunut.

535 not always have words"; they probably were of
517 the "hai ´ya hai ´ya" variety. Both sexes joined
574 in the dancing. The women wore eagle-down strings around their hair. The men wore the ceremonial feather skirt (tuhu´n) if they could get one, and painted their faces with stripes
[302] or spots of black and white. There were no special paint patterns for this dance.

No description of the dance steps was obtained, but J.A. made it clear that the dancing was not a group affair. A few men and women would dance at a time, which seems comparable to such pleasure dances as we know from the Wukchumni. There were no names for the dances: they were referred to as plain dance (hu´nai hati´m) or "little dance half the night" (wi´ti hati´m tu´pan toi´no).

[554] Although the chief's house was larger than others, the cooking, eating, and dancing took place outside.

535 At another time J.A. made brief reference
616 to a similar affair which she called "plain fandango" (hu´nai lonu´iw·s). This involved a moiety division (in eating and dancing?) but it was not reciprocal, i.e., the moieties did not align as host and guest. It was held any time of year. A large meal was eaten, dancing continued all night, in the morning the participants swam, ate breakfast, and dispersed. Paint was worn for this "dance."

Gifford, in his data on Tachi moieties, gives a bit of information which may be pertinent here.

> Two dances in which ... paints were used were mentioned. One of them, called toxeliwiš hatama, was danced by shamans (anču) of the toxelyuwiš moiety. A second dance, called kikitwi, was described as a round dance and was said to have been originated by the nutuwuts moiety. In its performance, however, some tokelyuwiš usually participated with the nutuwuts dancers...
>
> At a feast each moiety prepared and served the food for the opposite moiety. A feast of this sort was held in 1913, two years before my visit.

Tachi Ceremonies

114 The following Tachi information from M.G. seems unsound in large part, no doubt owing to misunderstanding by the interpreters and myself. It is given as recorded. As mentioned above,
[766] [152] the mourning ceremony was a distasteful topic, and only the least "mournful" parts were spoken of.

756 The Shamans' Contest was known to all the plains people: "Wolasi, Telamni, everyone had heŝwaš." It was performed in the summertime toward the conclusion of a mourning ceremony. A winatum got the doctors together, he got them from Čiau (Kingston, a Nutunutu village) and from the Wechihit. M.G. saw this at Čiau. The Wechihit were on one side and some Wuk-

h [i.e., pleasure dances. - Anal/st]

[P. 51b] Tubatulabal NS22

T Y 343 no door, the doorway being merely an opening between the rafters (there probably was a doorway frame of some sort). The fire was in front of the center post. Firewood was kept in two T Y [354] piles, one on each side of the entrance; men sitting next to these put wood on the fire.

T Y 515 Men did not indulge in sweats until they were twenty-five to thirty years old. Evening [late afternoon?] was the most popular time for a sweat, after which they would swim and return home to sleep. While in the sweat house men usually "just lay around." Sometimes, merely T Y ● to entertain others or to practice, a man would dance the ha´t·m (the "piston-rod step" of ● 517 Powers) if someone would sing for him. For such a performance there was no costume; it had no ritual significance. No games were played in the sweat house, nor was smoking indulged in -- "it was too strong in there."

MISCELLANEOUS DATA

T Y 524 Games.---Women played huču´w·s, the walnut-shell dice game, in the daytime only.

T Y 323 Pottery.---Pottery was made at Sototlo by women. The pounding of the clay paste, the coiling process were the only details remembered.

T Y 436 Money.---The small disc money of clamshells was measured by doubling a strand and then slipping it into a series of chain-stitch loops. A "rope" long enough to reach from the wrist to the shoulder, was worth $2.00 in "American money." Such a strand was exchanged for an eagle's leg with the down still intact.

T Y 286 Blankets.---F.M. did not know how "woven" skin blankets were made, save that strips of rabbitskin or wildcatskin were used in them.

T Y 805 Calendar.---A calendrical system of months based on moons was used in the old days. The only name he remembers was that for the month roughly coincident with February: kala´sa, meaning "blows it all away" or "cleaned up," because it was a period of high winds, trees were bare, and the leaves all blown away.

T Y 301 Hair nets.---These were used "everywhere" for the basis of feather head ornaments. A single hairpin (tsama´ni) held the ornament in place. Neither the net nor hairpin was used for ordinary dress, nor by women.

T Y [237] Yellowhammer strips.---Ornamental bands of sewn yellowhammer feathers (paiya´mən) were known but rarely used.[130] A doctor who owned one would wear it for the dancing on the night of celebration following a mourning ceremony. It was never used when the doctor was dressed for curing; it was "just to look pretty." The band was worn around the head with the ends hanging down the back.

T Y 534 Musical instruments.---The flute (uṭoi´’i) was made of elderwood; number of holes not

[130] Cf. Koso specimen (ibid., pl. 58).

276 inder so that it might be worn on a cord about the neck. A hunter or traveler would wear one: when one was faint from hunger, frightened by a dream or the sight of a ghost, a small bite off the pulčina would restore the powers of locomotion.

A man kept his tobacco cake in a little deerskin sack.

[757] The cake tobacco (šogən) was eaten in minute quantities, or pounded up with shell lime and water and taken as an emetic, or [759] broken up and smoked in a cane pipe. A liquid made from tobacco was smeared on the feet and ankles to discourage rattlesnakes.

● [517] A group of men would gather at one house about eight or nine o'clock in the evening to eat tobacco and lime. Women did not actively participate in these parties but might and did indulge in family privacy. Women and children were present, however, sitting in the background; the children were often asleep. This group partaking might be done on an evening before a hunt, or the mixture might be taken as a tonic for good health or to stimulate dreaming.

The host had a small mortar (koi´wiš) and pestle (pa´'lwi) especially for the purpose. A piece of baked shell was pulverized in the mortar, then a piece of cake tobacco pounded with it, and water poured in to make a thin liquor. The mortar and pestle were passed from man to man, each one taking a lick off the pestle; it did not matter which way it was passed. J.P.'s pestle had some small indentations in its side and he laughingly said those were there so more liquor could be got and licked off. As the men became nauseated they went forth to vomit, thence home "to sleep like drunk" (J.P.) (se´lawi ta´na šogo´ni na, dizzy to go tobacco-from I). Those who were going hunting or who were seeking supernatural power would eat only acorn gruel on the following morning. The same performance might be repeated on several successive nights, each time at a different house.

When women wanted to obtain nauseating effects from tobacco, they merely licked a cake directly (M.P.).

M.P.'s uncle and aunt ate a little tobacco every night: "a person couldn't sleep if they went to bed full."

[226] The shell used for the lime constituent was the freshwater oyster; the shell alone was [481] called či´'u, the whole thing "when alive," ka´'upič. The oysters were got at Woodlake; men dove for them or reached down off rafts; they were just visible on top of the mud.

Pipes.--A cigarette of cane (ka´dkid) was cut 6 to 8 inches long. The mouth end was filled with a little coil of fine cord, and tobacco, crumbled into tiny pebble-like pieces, was packed into the other end. The cigarette was ignited with a glowing twig. The cane burned down as it was smoked, yet it lasted a

STRUCTURES

343 Sweat house.--The Chukchansi sweat house was circular, some 18 to 20 feet in diameter. The floor was excavated about 3 feet, and the earth packed down hard. The supporting frame was of pine trunks about 5 inches thick [number not mentioned]. The door was 4 or 5 feet high, 2 feet wide, with no door covering. A smoke hole was left in the center of the roof, which was about 8 feet high at that point.[100] The roof beams were of green live oak saplings, and on these was piled a thick layer of chaparral brush, leaves, and lastly earth. The fire was just within the door so that one had to jump over it in entering.

343 515 517 The usual sweat house held ten to twelve men sitting or lying close together. Very old and very young men did not use it. Some men slept there. For sweating they went there about 10 a.m. and about 3 to 4 p.m. After sweating they went to swim in a pool especially dug or enlarged for that purpose. At Gratniu (Picayune) there were two sweat houses in use: "you went to either one you wanted to." At Aplau, another Chukchansi village, there was but one sweat house.

[533] There was no special ceremony on the completion of a sweat house. Men would gather there as soon as it was ready and just sing for pleasure, as an expression of happiness. The informant M.N. said that sometimes the hand [524] game was played inside and often men amused themselves by having a sweating contest; more and more wood was added to the fire until the last man was forced out by the intense heat.

No ceremony was held in the sweat house; no dancing, "just singing" (J.R.). As an [533] example of songs men sang in the sweat house, C.D. gave the following:

Go see
You too
I'm going up north
Go out
You too

Only men used the sweat house, according to most informants, but M.N. said, after the men got through and went out, women went in.

342 Dwellings.--The Chukchansi dwelling was a conical thatched house (fig. 5, c, d, Pt. I). When the circumference was laid out, usually about 12 to 14 feet in diameter, postholes about 18 inches apart were dug all around it. The space between the door poles, however, was about 8 inches wider than the rest. All in- [184] formants stated that the frame poles were bunched together at the top [the characteristic Yokuts hoop being absent], "so water couldn't [171] come through."[101] About four horizontal withes

[100] This sounds like the Miwok 4-post type. -- A.H.G.

[101] Kroeber, however, credits the Chukchansi conical house with a ring at the apex (Handbook, 522).

[P.225a] Western Mono NS25

from house to house. "He went the rounds and never declined" (S.O.). This procedure was not followed with persons whose intimate connections in a village took them there frequently.

A person approaching a house shouted or otherwise drew attention to himself. To approach quietly was looked upon with suspicion.

The Waksachi greeting used by B.O. was hani ˊ'iwa'ũ ñwa [one word]. This he claimed was wholly aboriginal although the translation is practically the "How are you?" of European culture. The proper or expected reply was nasu ˊmi naũ ñwa tsatsa ˊmo (all of us well, or satisfactory).

Any old man might be called [paternal] "uncle" as a term of good-nature and esteem, much as Europeans call any greybeard "little grandfather."

During the evening, between supper and complete darkness, or after dark in the winter, people sat around conversing. Some would be engaged in tasks such as acorn-shelling or preparing tobacco for the pre-retiring drink. They talked about their plans for ceremonies, hunting, or other occupations; particularly important were discussions of the seasonal moves to other localities for fish, acorns, seeds, etc. Older people told stories, explained the nature of the world, and prescribed conduct for youngsters. This was the only means of instruction.

During the evening young people would shell acorns while some old person told stories or adventures. Stories were told only at night. S.O. recalls Etak and Wilolohi as especially fine entertainers.

The hand game was favorite evening entertainment as it could only be played at night, whereas the women's dice game could be played only during the day.

Persons wishing to induce good dreaming would foregather at a house to drink of tobacco and lime.

MANUFACTURES

Baskets

According to D. the basketry of the Michahai and Waksachi was exactly like that of their Yokuts neighbors. From other informants we know this to be true, yet it should be pointed out that a mutual exchange has brought this about. The Mono-type cradle of twined rods and fan-shaped shade has been adopted by the Yokuts, while the Yokuts circular coiled sifting tray has been taken over by the Mono in preference to their own twined triangular sifting tray. Several shapes and their uses were distinguished by D. and may be taken as typical for all the foothill tribes, both Yokuts and Mono, between Kings River and Tule River. They are shown in figures 2 and 3, Part I. It may

W Y 796 668 "We are having this dance, and we want to tell you what we have heard. Where we got these songs and dance one man told us about what is going to come.

"We are having this dance for a dead man. W Y [775] He is where we got these songs.[200] After a few more years this dead man is going to come from where we got these songs and dance. Right now that man is very far off, he is at watsatsa´ošao pa´´a n:m (the crack-in-the-world our home) way off to the east. There is a fire there all the time, playing [games], and dancing all the time. The people there disappear in the daytime. We are making this dance for those ghosts (i´n:l). You must do this all the time. Then there will be no more getting sick and dying."

W Y [783] Tapunači also told the people to swim or bathe themselves each morning. But no verbal ritual comparable to baptism was prescribed and, as morning bathing was customary with Yokuts and probably Western Mono, this was probably a reëmphasis of native custom.

Then the dance began with singers using songs which were meaningless to S.O. The only one he recalls is this:

he´bar:n, he´baya, he´nani
[repeated over and over]

W Y [535] Dancers of both sexes indiscriminately joined hands and, facing inwards, circled to the left [clockwise]. Never did they go in the opposite direction in this or any other dance. The arms were bent upward at the elbows, and the clasped hands beat downward at each step. The dancing continued until the company was exhausted, when they sat down to listen to a short exhortation by Takaš, Košowi, or one of the Wobonuch singers. The alternate dancing, preaching, and resting were continued from about eight o'clock in the evening until daylight. There was no sequence or climax to the routine, so far as S.O. knew. Although "any kind" of clothes were worn, all the participants had red and black paint on their faces. The common pattern was three horizontal lines (male) or rows of dots (female) across the cheeks and nose.

W Y [302 83] Eventually there were so many participants that two concentric circles of dancers were formed. The singers sat between two fires within the circle. When speakers addressed the company, they stood in front of the singers.

W Y [517] During the day the people were free to play games or do as they pleased, but the majority were so tired that they merely bathed, slept, and lounged. This continued for six days.[201]

[200] Presumably in the Land of the Dead where the Paiute originator of the cult may have journeyed in his trance, as did most prophets of such movements (see Spier, The Prophet Dance of the Northwest and Its Derivatives).

[201] S.O. omitted any hint of the final routing of the dancers by white settlers, an episode of which I later learned elsewhere.

2: Kroeber E-5 (ca. 1918) 1953
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525 apathetic, as is the wont. It is a game in which not sticks and luck but the tensest of wills, the keenest perceptions, and the suppliest of muscular responses are matched; and only rarely are the faculties of a Caucasian left sufficiently undulled in adult age to compete other than disastrously against the Indian practiced in his specialty. Seen in this light, the contortions, gesticulations, [152] noises, and excitement of the native are not the mere uncontrolledness of an overgrown child, but the outward reflexes of a powerfully surcharged intensity, and devices that at once stimulate the contestant's energy still further and aid him in dazzling and confusing his opponent. There is possibly no game in the world that, played sitting, has, with equal intrinsic simplicity, such competitive capacities.

The Yaudanchi shuffled under a blanket instead of behind the back or in bunches of hay. Among the Chukchansi only women used the blanket.

Chomwosh is the guessing or matching of hidden fingers. It is too little described to allow of a decision between the possibilities of native and Mediterranean origin.

Dice was the woman's game. There were two forms. *Huchuwish* was played with 8 *huech*, half shells of nut filled with pitch or asphalt and bits of sea shell, thrown from both hands on a basketry tray, *t'aiwan*. The far-away Chemehuevi play this much like the southern Yokuts, though with 6 instead of 8 pieces; it appears to be a game of Shoshonean origin. The Chukchansi keep the name, but use 6 split acorn kernels. Beyond them, the course of the game becomes uncertain. For the Miwok nothing is known, and the Maidu seem to lack all dice. The Yaudanchi played for 12 counters, and the scoring ran: 5 of 8 flat surfaces up, 2 counters; 2 up, 1; any other number, none. The Chukchansi won by taking 10 counters, and considered only the possible combinations of falls, irrespective of side. Six to none counted 4 points; 4 to 2 or 3 to 3, 1; 5 to 1, nothing. Such variations seem to occur in all Californian games, even between adjacent areas.

The second dice game, *tachhuwish*, was played with 6 (or 8) split sticks, *dalak*, of elderwood in the north, of cane in the south, burned with a pattern on the convex side and thrown on end on a skin.

There was a generic word, *goywwinich*, for gambler. *Gwiunaushid mak*, "let us gamble," the Yaudanchi would say.

AESTHETICS.

● 517 Apart from basket patterns, there was no trace of activity of graphic or plastic art in Yokuts life. The images in the mourning ceremony were symbols of the rudest kind. Anything like the trac-

2: Kroeber E-5 (ca. 1918) 1953
NS29 Yokuts NS29

ing of a picture or shaping of a figure was foreign to the native mind. Even conventionalized symbols were lacking, for conventionalization is a standardization of some artistic impulse, and this impulse never manifested itself. The stiff figures of men and animals that occasionally appear on baskets are invariably due to American influence, among the Yokuts as well as among all other Californian groups. One can not have become imbued with a feeling for the decorative value of California basketry without resenting these childish introductions as fatal to the inherent aesthetic qualities of the work. Our tastes have been infinitely more cultivated than those of the native Californian; but in the few directions, or one direction, in which he had made an incipient progress in ornamentation, his habits had poise and restraint.

The ungraphic, unplastic, and unsymbolic character of native Californian civilization is complete to a degree that is almost inconceivable. It is only rarely that an Indian can be induced to draw in the sand the most schematic sketch of the rivers or mountains of his habitat. In southern California there are indeed some faint stirrings in the sand paintings, but only under a strong ritualistic motive; and the poverty and rudeness of these, compared with their Navaho and Pueblo prototypes, reveal the aridity of the artistic soil which this southwestern religio-aesthetic influence encountered in its invasion of California.

In all the remainder of the State even this trace is wanting. For once the deep cleavage between the northwest and the central south is effaced. The Yurok and Hupa culture may be a North Pacific coast civilization in nine-tenths of its essential impulses and goals; in representative art it is as Californian as that of the Maidu or Yokuts.

How far some beginnings of literary form have evolved in Yokuts traditions, in comparison with those of their neighbors, it would be difficult to state. The languages, the emotions, and the pleasures of the natives are everywhere known with too little intimacy for a judgment to be of value. Myths have been recorded primarily with reference to their episodic content, their religious associations, or their systematic coherence. Such as are available from the Yokuts evince a lower literary pitch, a less intensity of presentation, than those of northern and southern California at their best. But we do not know how far they are artistically representative; and what has already been said about the animal pantheon of these people suffices to reveal that the real merits of their folklore lie implicit in a background or setting of which the skeletonized translations that are available give to us but rudimentary hints.

2: Kroeber E-5 (ca. 1918) 1953
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517 533 Much the same must be said of music, only in a still stronger degree. Some differences of external form, or involved system, are apparent between the songs of various parts of California. But as long as no exact analysis has been rendered, and especially as long as no one has approached this music with any desire to enter into its essential spirit, comparisons between the aesthetic value of the inclinations and achievements of this and that tribe are empty.

517 534 [765] Southern Yokuts men sometimes played the musical bow after settling themselves in bed; the Chukchansi in mourning the dead. These may be but two expressions of one employment. Modern forms of the instrument have a peg key for adjusting the tension, or are made on cornstalks. In old days a true shooting bow, or a separate instrument made on the model of a bow, was used. *Mawu*, or *mawuwi*, was its name. One end was held in the mouth, while the lone string was tapped, not plucked, with the nail of the index finger; the melody, audible to himself only, was produced by changes in the size of the resonance chamber formed by the player's oral cavity.

THE TYPE OF YOKUTS CIVILIZATION.

171 184 181 The affiliations of Yokuts civilization are nearly equal in all directions. To the north, their system of totemic moieties connects them with the Miwok while certain detailed elements of their culture, such as the Y-frame cradle and the magpie headdress, link them definitely with the Maidu. To the east their twined basketry has close relations as far as the remoter edge of the Great Basin. Toward the Shoshonean and Yuman south there are innumerable threads: the Jimson weed ritual, the arrow straightener, the carrying net, to mention only a few. Toward the west the decay of Salinan and Chumash culture makes exact comparison difficult, but what little is known of the former people evidences a strong Yokuts impress, while with the nearer Chumash relations of trade were close and must have brought many approaches of custom in their train. It is difficult to say where the most numerous and most basic links stretch.

Equally impressive, however, are the features distinctive of the civilization of the Yokuts, or rather of the group composed of themselves and their smaller and less known Shoshonean neighbors on the immediate east and south. These specialties include the true tribal organization, the duality of chieftainship, the regulated functions of transvestites, the coordinated animal pantheon, the eagle-down skirt, the constricted coiled basket, a distinctive pottery, and the communal house, to mention only a few points.

171 181 It thus seems that the Yokuts were a nation of considerable individuality. It appears throughout California that the dwellers in

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

285 517 It is a statement of bare fact to record that the baskets made by the Yokuts Indian women are the very finest known to have been made by machine or by hand by any people of any race in the history of the world. The Pomo Indians of Lake [171] County made a basket covered with colored feathers, and probably made more kinds of baskets, but they were no finer in workmanship than those made by the Yokuts on Kings, Kaweah, Tule and Kern Rivers, and probably, in prewhite days, throughout the San Joaquin. Not only are the stitches in some baskets as fine as sixty to the inch, but color combination, texture, shape and design are completely fascinating and present some of the finest conventionalized designs known to the art world.

285 531 A Yokuts Indian woman of primeval days, seated on a deerskin or tule mat under a spreading valley oak, would have been as little expected to turn out a beautiful work of art as any known primitive person. One is both privileged and amazed who has seen them at work amongst the litter of an Indian camp. Their persons and clothing were often ragged and soiled, their homes and furniture were of the most meager, primitive kind. There was little in the immediate surroundings to suggest anything used in designing a Yokuts basket.

But the Yokuts woman saw far beyond her camp. Without a drawing or pattern of any kind she placed upon her basket the most pleasing and delightful representations of mountains, birds, butterflies, deer, quail, streams, lightning and the heroes of her tribal myths and stories. This was all done, remember, [412] with a crude chipped-stone knife and a bone awl, not another tool of any kind.

Beginning at the bottom of a curved, flaring basket, the Yokuts woman placed the first colored stitches of a design, complicated and involved beyond the imagination and memory of most white persons. She carried this design through to completion without a pattern or drawing.

One must also appreciate that for pictorial purposes stitched basketry has the limitations of the mosaic, the cross-stitch, or the loop used in hooking rugs. It was not possible to reproduce most objects in their true shape and form. They were conventionalized. A triangle could represent a deer's track, an arrow point, or a flame. A realistic reproduction of a quail topknot stood for quail: the shape that the inch-worm assumed in traveling represented it. Butterfly was sometimes represented by a wavy line suggestive of its flight. Four small

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

rectangles construct an amusingly accurate fly, and resemble a head-on view of an airplane. Five small rectangles create an unforgettable water-skater. Small wavy or straight lines are caterpillars. Small groups, or long, winding strings of small squares represent ants.

In the selection of her materials, in the dyeing, preparation, and assembling of them, in the accurate weaving of myths and historical events into the designs on her baskets, it can truly be stated that the Yokuts Indian woman was one of the most versatile artists in the world. She was mythologist, craftsman, weaver, designer, historian, mineralogist, botanist, mathematician, and poet.

YOKUTS ART

The mere mention of Yokuts Indian art seems a challenge to most persons. The thing farthest from their thought is that a Yokuts Indian could have developed anything which in any way could be termed true art. This is not the case. It is true that many of the old forms of Yokuts art are gone, perhaps never to be known, but it is due only to our destructive powers that there is not today more evidence of several forms of their art.

The Yokuts were developing to a point where art was appearing in their manufacture of pottery. True, this had advanced only to the stage where simple ornamental forms were being attempted and where borders and designs were being applied with the thumb nail or a sharp stick. But the beginning was there and there have been found within Yokuts territory several pieces of pottery which were banded with interesting designs and which probably were not traded into this territory. Border designs were also cut into the large steatite cooking vessels around the opening in the top.

Indian art was applied to many articles. The small apron on the front of the breech clout was sometimes painted with designs symbolic of the local tribe, or clan. The colors and pigments used were the same as those used in rock painting, being earth colors mixed with the juices of plants, most commonly chilicote oil, mixed with the juice of the tall milkweed, the fiber of which was used for making string.

Of all the art common to the many Yokuts tribes, that which has made famous the Yokuts *moke* (mo'-ke, woman) throughout the world, has been applied to their several forms of

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

basketry. Although this topic has been introduced in the preceding chapter, an entire volume would not exhaust it. It is necessary to consider it further here. The designs are always simple in nature, often symbolic and never unpleasing to the eye. There is nothing in connection with Indian basketry designs which conflicts with the well observed rules which underlie the white man's design. The striking effect of some of the most simple primitive designs is amazing—sometimes perfectly fascinating.

At the present time there are a few Yokuts basketry artists still at work. Their work resembles more the old unspoiled primitive forms than that of almost any other Indians, because the Spanish did not often penetrate to the eastern portion of the San Joaquin Valley, and the old mode of life was last overthrown there. There is now only one unspoiled Yokuts basket maker on the Kaweah River. There is also one on the San Joaquin River, as well as one or two on Kings River.

The old Yokuts seldom attempted anything but symbolic or conventional forms. Figures attempting to show birds, animals or persons in their true shape, were seldom used. This was remarkably good taste and shows a deep understanding of true art on the part of the basket makers, for they were working in a cross stitch type of reproduction and could not smoothly develop the form of a deer or a bird.

Some of the most common designs used on basketry represented the various snakes common to the San Joaquin Valley. These designs lent themselves very nicely to a coiled construction and their patterns proved well adapted to the materials used.

The Indian painted his spear, his bow and his arrows. The colors used were blues, reds, yellows, blacks and whites, juices of berries and other plants being used. The designs were genrally geometric. The marking on the arrows served a very practical, as well as artistic purpose. It was of importance to the hunter to be able to identify his own arrows. This was not only in connection with the proving of ownership of an arrow which had been shot into the brush, but also to prove who had killed certain game. Various colored lines were banded around the shaft and foreshaft of the arrow in the same way that modern archers mark their arrows.

Another form of art, probably as well developed as any other, had to do with the painting of the faces and bodies of the

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Indian. Here again natural colors, often earth colors, were used and the paint was applied in thick coats, not only to the face but often to the arms, legs and bodies. Different designs were used in connection with different ceremonies. These varied somewhat among the numerous Yokuts tribes. In this way a great variety was worked out.

How common was painting on buckskin will probably never be known. In several graves where bodies had been cremated, I have found fragments of charred buckskin which showed quite plainly a painted design using at least two colors. How much of this sort of evidence has been destroyed by careless "digging" will never be known, but I am of the opinion that such art was at one time quite extensive.

Another form of art was developed in connection with the handles of soap root brushes, dice, wooden utensils, knives, ceremonial equipment and stone mortars. This consisted of coating the articles with asphaltum, or pitch, into which were pressed beads and bits of abalone shell. The beads used were generally of white sea shell and contrasted quite nicely with the black asphaltum. The writer has seen many examples of the above art, although almost all of them were in an advanced state of decomposition. The rims of mortars were sometimes coated with asphaltum and covered with beads and abalone shell and must have presented a rather pleasing appearance.

Due to the perishable nature of much of the old Yokuts equipment, a considerable amount of their art will probably never be known. How many other pieces of paraphernalia and peculiar but artistic creations have not been recorded can only be imagined. However, enough is known about their art and painting and applied designs to be certain that at least upon occasion the Yokuts Indian was able to dress himself up quite colorfully and was not the sombre, drab person that we perhaps imagine.

YOKUTS PAINTINGS

When white settlers first came to the San Joaquin Valley, one of the things which attracted their attention was the many Indian paintings which were common upon the walls of the rock shelters and caves along the Sierra foothills and at some places in the Coast Range. These paintings have been the subject of much speculation and some investigation, and a ready topic for many writers. From time to time various persons have claim-

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ed to be able to read these paintings and have given lengthy and elaborate interpretations of the many characters which have been reproduced in the various designs.

I have often discussed Indian paintings with pioneer American settlers, with persons who claimed to have solved their meanings, and with the Indians themselves. I have found little justification for the great amount of importance attached to them and will attempt in the paragraphs that follow to explain something of the nature of the various paintings, as well as the probable extent of their meaning.

First of all we must remember that painting was not confined to rocks alone, but that breech clouts, bows, arrows, buckskins, and even the faces and bodies of the Indians themselves, were painted. If this is kept in mind, the reader will understand that the paintings upon the rocks were no great phenomena, nor were they really unique as the only example of such work done by Yokuts.

The writer is informed by persons who have seen Indians mix their paints, that the vehicle or binder used was often the sap from the common milkweed, mixed with chilicote or wild cucumber oil. With such a vehicle were mixed the various earth colors which were more or less common throughout the territory bordering the San Joaquin Valley.

White persons are too often guilty of overlooking things which are obvious to the Indian, or to the close observer. While driving through the Sierra foothills with a companion for the purpose of visiting some Indian paintings, I was asked where the Indians obtained their red paint. The explanation was made that the Indians used the natural earth colors, which were more or less common in the very locality through which we were then traveling. The companion stated that he could scarcely believe this, because he had never seen any of that color within a range of more than 150 miles. At this point the car was stopped and the discussion continued. After a few moments the cut bank at the side of the road was pointed out and proved to be an outcropping of the richest red earth.

The white color used was, in some cases at least, obtained from diatomaceous earth. The writer has found in Indian graves chunks of this soft chalk in the natural state as well as molded balls of white pigment prepared from the same material.

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The yellow pigment sometimes found is a yellow ochre obtained at many places throughout the volcanic regions of the Sierra, both in the northern section and on the desert side in eastern Kern County. In addition to the red pigment already mentioned, there were outcroppings of cinnabar at several places along the summit of the Coast Range, from as far south as the Poso Chaná near Coalinga, to Del Puerto Creek opposite Crow's Landing. This is the ore from which quicksilver is refined. It possesses a bright color, varying from maroon to the light red of common brick.

Black pigment was obtained from charcoal or from natural deposits of graphite. I have in my possession a small Indian mortar, the inside of which even yet is covered with black pigment. All of the colors mentioned are permanent. The white and black could probably never be faded, even by direct exposure to the sunlight through thousands of years of time. This is also probably true of the red pigment. In the old paintings the yellow appears as fresh as any of the other colors.

The permanency of the Indian paintings depended largely upon the binder with which they were mixed and the exposure of the rock surface upon which they were placed. With few exceptions, the various paintings were upon sheltered surfaces, which were not only protected from the sun, but from moisture as well. Some of these paintings done in three colors on such protected surfaces are probably as fresh today as when they were first painted.

The above is not true where the paintings have been subject to moisture. The red paintings at Hospital Rock on the Kaweah River and those at other places where the rain has driven against them have almost weathered away. In fact, close investigation shows that what color is left consists of pigment which has penetrated the porous surface of the rock.

The common statement made by white pioneers concerning the Indian paintings is that the Indians knew nothing about them. This can scarcely be true, because I have found living *Wukchumne* Indians who knew the names of the various paintings and who attached no great mystery to them. Among these were Sam Garfield, *Tawp'-naw*, *Ichow*, and *Pohut*.

These Wukchumne Indians said that the paintings were generally placed at an important village site, one which was permanently inhabited, or at some place where Indian ceremonies were performed. They stated that tribal equipment, such as

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symmetrical mortars and pestles for grinding Indian tobacco, or costumes for tribal ceremonies, were often concealed near these paintings.

The idea furnished was that the paintings added prestige to the spot and served to awe the lesser characters of the tribe and instill in them a respect for the equipment concealed there. The Wukchumne stated that such places were *Trip'-ne* (supernatural). Among the Wukchumne, paintings in general are called *Copch'-ke*. Red paintings, such as are common at Hospital Rock, were called *Haw'-you*. Paintings using mixed colors were called *Hoo'-cha-ing-utch*.

This writer is very skeptical about interpretations of Indian paintings, at least about those found bordering the San Joaquin Valley. His opinion is that the only person who could interpret those paintings is the man who painted them.

The above opinion is based upon two facts. The first and most important is that there is no common character which appears with any degree of regularity throughout the territory in which the paintings occur. Second, with the knowledge which the Indians have concerning the paintings, there should appear an interpretation of some sort, which would be more or less consistent among the various tribes.

The Indians readily recognize the characters which represent animals, but they offer no other explanation for the geometrical designs and line drawings than to give the Indian name for circle, triangle, square or other common figures. In exception to this they do identify drawings of the sun, moon and *Chapet* (Chah'-peet—the Indian doctor's magic tray), and a few mythological characters.

In each tribe there were probably one or more persons who amused themselves by placing paintings upon the rocks and other objects surrounding the camp site. These parties probably developed skill beyond the average, and it is undoubtedly their work which we see today, placed there for the amusement of the painter, for the awe of the other members of the tribe, and for the interest and speculation of white invaders.